(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the University is unable to meet the practical lesson requirements of students at 16 regional and 220 study centres in different parts of the country?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH):

(a) and (b) The IGNOU has been preparing for the launch of a number of new academic programmes which contain several courses in the eighth plan. According to information furnished by IGNOU, the following 9 programmes are under preparation and proposed to be launched during 1994, some early during the year and others later depending upon the preparation and production of course materials and finalisation of the arrangements for their delivery including labouratory experiments and work experience:

(1) Diploma in Early Child Care and Education

(2) Diploma in Nutrition and Health Education

(3) Bachelor's Degree in Nursing

(4) Post Graduate Diploma in Journalism and Mass Communication

(5) Master's Degree in Library Science

(6) Diploma in Computer Applications

(7) Advanced Diploma in Construction Management

(8) Advanced Diploma in Water Resources

(9) Certificate in Tourism

Of them, Diploma in Nutrition and Health Education has already been announced and will commence from the next academic session starting from January, 1994. The announcement of above mentioned programmes is in compliance of the programme of Action of the National Policy on Education 1992 which envisages that the open learning system at the tertiary level should focus attention on education and training in areas related to employment and self-employment.

(c) IGNOU has informed that the programmes which require practical and laboratory session are not offered at all the study centres. These are offered only at selected study centres where arrangemetns for laboratory and practical work is made.

भगवान शिव के मंदिर के रख-रखाव का कार्य

*451. **श्री सुशील कुमार सभाजीराव शिन्दे** : क्या मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री 18 दिसम्बर, 1992 को राज्य सभा में अतारांकित प्रश्न 3878 के दिए गए उत्तर को देखेंगे और यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि सरकार द्वारा दिए गए आश्वासनों के बावजूद भारतीय पुरातत्व सर्वेक्षण के अन्तर्गत हरीश चन्द्र गढ़ स्थित भगवान शिव के मंदिर का मरम्मत-कार्य अभी तक नहीं किया गया है ;

(ख) क्या यह भी सच है कि मंदिर के रख-रखाव का कार्य केवल कागजों तक ही सीमित है; और

(ग) यदि हां, तो इस प्राचीन मंदिर की मरम्मत का काम शुरू करने के लिए सरकार क्या कदम उठाने का विचार रखती है ?

मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री (श्री अर्जुन सिंह) : (क) और (ख) हरीश चन्द्र गढ़ स्थित शिव मंदिर के मरम्मत कार्य के प्रस्ताव को, हाल ही में, अन्तिम रूप दिया गया है। भारी वर्षा और किले में पहुंचन, मुश्किल होने के कारण कार्य जल्दी शुरू नहीं किया जा सका।

पेड़-पौधों की सफाई का प्रारंभिक कार्य शुरू कर दिया गया है।

(ग) इस मंदिर का संरक्षण कार्य चालू वित्तीय वर्ष के दौरान पूरा हो जाएगा।

Performance of the Visvesvaraya Iron and Steel Limited, Karnataka

*452. SHRI G. Y. KRISHNAN : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem captioned 'Former VISL chief flays SAIL bosses' appearing in the 'Indian Express (Business Express Section)', New Delhi on 28th July, 1993;

(b) if so, what are the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) the reasons for poor performance of the Visvesvaraya Iron and Steel Limited, Karnataka; and

(d) the steps being taken to bring about improvements in the working of the Steel Plant in the spheres of production quality, product development and customer service and make it a viable Undertaking?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The "Indian Express" carries a news item reportedly made by Shri Amit Mazumdar, Ex-Executive Director of VISL, after he had gone on retirement. The points raised in the news item are alleged step-mothrely treatment meted out to VISL by Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), quitting of half a dozen top executives of SAIL, profits of SAIL at Rs. 1200 crores, implementation of the scheme of blast furnace in VISL, high cost of power, improvement in marketing and liquidity problem.

According to SAIL the factual position on the above points are as under:—

(i) Capital expenditure allocation for the VIII Plan for VISL is Rs. 125 crores. Against this SAIL had already given Rs. 61.25 crores. In the current year 1993-94 SAIL has spent over Rs. 25 crores in the first four months itself. The total expenditure for the whole of VIII Plan is expected to be Rs. 149 crores.

(ii) Only one officer has taken voluntary retirement and another officer has resigned in the recent past for better prospects.

(iii) Budgetted profit for SAIL for the year 1992-93 was Rs. 138 crores against which SAIL's actual profit was Rs. 423.40 crores. Other figures in the news item are not correct and are infact irrelevant.

(iv) The statement regarding Blast Furnace Project of VISL in the news item is not correct. This project is to be completed by March, 1994.

(v) It is a fact that power cost has affected the profitability of VISL adversely. It has increased from Rs. 0.99 per unit in August, 1989 to Rs. 2.21 per unit on Ist August, 1993.

(vi) Shri Mazumdar has claimed that marketing thrust was lacking at VISL which got a boost on his taking over as Chief Executive. It is worth mentioning that VISL is primarily an alloy and special steel producing Company. Whereas VISL produced 58,829 tonnes of alloy and special steels during 1991 it came down to 54,376 tonnes in 1991-92 and further came down to 45,614 tonnes in 1992-93. Despite restricting the production of alloy and special steels the outstanding receivables by the Company had simultaneously increased during the tenure of Shri Mazumdar. Thus lower sales coupled with improper financial management put the Company into serious liquidity position. Infact, had SAIL not supported VISL in providing captive market for 100 of its ferro-silicon production, VISL would have been put